



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
-----------------	-------------	----------------------	---------------------	------------------

10/797,569

03/11/2004

Lutz Ramonat

31509-201831

4807

26694

7590

04/17/2007

VENABLE LLP

P.O. BOX 34385

WASHINGTON, DC 20043-9998

EXAMINER

JOYCE, WILLIAM C

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3682

SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD OF RESPONSE	MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
--	-----------	---------------

3 MONTHS

04/17/2007

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire 6 MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.

**Office Action Summary**

Application No.

10/797,569

Applicant(s)

RAMONAT ET AL.

Examiner

William C. Joyce

Art Unit

3682

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --  
**Period for Reply**

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

**Status**

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 April 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

**Disposition of Claims**

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1 and 3-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-7,9 and 10 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☒ Claim(s) 8 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

**Application Papers**

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

**Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119**

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

**Attachment(s)**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)            | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)           |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)   | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____                                      |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____  | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                          |

### **DETAILED ACTION**

This is the First Office Action in response to the Election filed on April 9, 2007.

#### ***Election/Restrictions***

1. Applicant's election without traverse of Group I, Figures 1-3 in the reply filed on April 9, 2007 is acknowledged.
2. Claims 2, 11, and 12 are withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b) as being drawn to a nonelected species, there being no allowable generic or linking claim. Election was made **without** traverse in the reply filed on April 9, 2007.

#### ***Priority***

3. Receipt is acknowledged of papers submitted under 35 U.S.C. 119(a)-(d), which papers have been placed of record in the file.

#### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

5. Claims 7 and 9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

a. Claim 7, line 3, the limitation "graphite-like" is not fully understood.

Specifically, the term "like" fails to particularly point out the metes and bounds of the desired patent protection.

b. Claim 9, the limitation "said lubricant" lacks proper antecedent basis."

***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 1, 3-7; 9, and 10 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Namimatsu et al. (USP 5,615,955) in view of Kondo et al. (USP 5,782,135).

Namimatsu et al. discloses a linear guide device having a plurality of recirculating balls, the balls comprising load bearing balls (B) and non-load bearing spacer balls (B1).

Namimatsu et al. does not teach the claimed materials used in forming the components of the linear guide device, such as a plurality of balls being formed of two different materials. The prior art to Kondo et al. teaches a bearing device having recirculating balls, the balls being formed of load bearing balls (31) and non-loaded bearing balls (32), the load bearing balls being formed of a core metal material and an

outer PTFE coating, wherein the outer coating is different from the material used in forming the ball raceway.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form the balls of Namimatsu et al. from the materials disclosed by Kondo et al., motivation being to minimize friction, provide good durability, and provide good corrosion resistance.

With respect to claim 7, the outer shell is considered "graphite-like."

8. Claims 1, and 3-7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Namimatsu et al. (USP 5,615,955) in view of Haller (USP 3,491,423).

Namimatsu et al. discloses a linear guide device having a plurality of recirculating balls, the balls comprising load bearing balls (B) and non-load bearing spacer balls (B1).

Namimatsu et al. does not teach the claimed materials used in forming the components of the linear guide device, such as a plurality of balls being formed of two different materials. The prior art to Haller teaches a bearing device having balls formed of a core ceramic material and an outer sintered powder steel.

It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to form the load balls of Namimatsu et al. from the materials disclosed by Haller, motivation being to minimize inertial forces and momentum of the recirculating balls.

With respect to claim 6, the sintered powder steel outer shell is considered a hard material.

With respect to claim 7, the sintered powder steel outer shell is considered "graphite-like."

***Allowable Subject Matter***

9. Claim 8 is objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to William C. Joyce whose telephone number is (571) 272-7107. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday - Thursday 7:30-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Richard Ridley can be reached on (571) 272-6917. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Art Unit: 3682

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

  
William C. Joyce